

In the Claims

Please cancel claim 18 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please substitute amended claims 1, 16, 17, and 19 with the same number.

1. (Currently Amended) A jet propelled watercraft, comprising:

a hull including a bottom hull and a top deck secured over the bottom hull, the hull defining an engine compartment sized to contain an internal combustion engine for powering a jet propulsion unit, the jet propulsion unit including a steerable water discharge nozzle, the top deck having an inner wall, an outer wall, a raised, longitudinally extending seat adapted to accommodate an operator in straddle fashion and at least one access opening therein, the access opening having a lip and an exposed edge; and

an access opening seal affixed to the opening, the access opening seal comprising an annular gasket sized and configured to conform to the shape of the opening, the gasket having a top portion and a side portion, the two portions cooperating to define an exterior surface and an interior surface, the top portion of the gasket being positioned around and attached to the lip of the opening with the interior surface of the top portion abutting the outer wall and the side portion positioned along and covering the exposed edge; and

a storage compartment disposed in the access opening, the storage compartment having a flange that rests on the gasket, wherein a water tight seal is formed when the compartment is disposed in the access opening; and optionally an attachment means attached to the interior surface the gasket.

2. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1, wherein the gasket has a bottom portion that is substantially parallel to the top portion with the side portion being located between the top and

bottom portions, the three portions cooperating to define an exterior surface and an interior surface, and the interior surface of the bottom portion abutting the inner wall.

3. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1, wherein the gasket has a generally L-shaped cross-section.

4. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1, wherein the two portions are disposed at approximately a right angle relative to each other when the gasket is viewed in cross-section.

5. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1, wherein the side portion is arced.

6. (Original) The watercraft of claim 2, wherein the top portion and the side portion are disposed at approximately a right angle relative to each other and the bottom portion is disposed at approximately a right angle relative to the side portion.

7. (Original) The watercraft of claim 2, wherein the side portion is arced.

8. (Original) The watercraft of claim 2, wherein the gasket when viewed in cross is J-shaped or U-shaped.

9. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the gasket further comprises an attachment means, the attachment means being an adhesive or an adhesive strip attached to the interior surface of the top portion.

10. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the gasket is adhered to the access opening lip with an adhesive, an adhesive strip or a mechanical fastener.
11. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the gasket is formed of a polymeric material.
12. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the gasket is formed of a polymeric material having a durometer ranging between 30-80.
13. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the gasket is formed of ethylene propylene diene methylene terpolymer having a durometer ranging between 30-80.
14. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising an access opening cover, wherein a watertight seal is formed when the cover is in a closed position.
15. (Original) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising an access opening cover, wherein the gasket has an engaging structure formed in or affixed to the exterior surface of the top portion and a watertight seal is formed when the cover is in a closed position.
16. (Currently Amended) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising an access opening cover and a container disposed in the access opening, the container having a flange that rests on the gasket, and an upper container a cover seal that is positioned between the cover and

the flange when the cover is in a closed position, wherein a watertight seal is formed when the cover is in a closed position.

17. (Currently Amended) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising an access opening cover; ~~a container disposed in the access opening, the container having a flange that rests on the gasket,~~ and ~~an upper container~~ a cover seal that is positioned between the cover and the flange when the cover is in a closed position, and an engaging structure formed in or affixed to the exterior surface of the top portion, wherein a watertight seal is formed when the cover is in a closed position.

18. (Canceled) The watercraft of claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising a storage compartment disposed in the access opening, the storage compartment having a flange that rests on the gasket, wherein a watertight seal is formed when the compartment is disposed in the access opening.

19. (Currently Amended) An access opening seal for an access opening formed in an article, device, or structure having a inner wall and an outer wall and the access opening having an exposed edge and a lip, comprising:

an annular gasket sized and configured to conform to the shape of the access opening, the gasket having a top portion and a side portion, the two portions cooperating to define an exterior surface and an interior surface, the gasket being further configured to form a water tight seal when a storage compartment having a flange is disposed in the access opening with the flange resting on the gasket; wherein, when the seal is affixed to

the access opening, the top portion of the gasket is positioned around and attached to the lip of the opening with the interior surface of the top portion abutting the outer wall and the side portion positioned along and covering the exposed edge; and optionally an attachment means attached to the interior surface of the gasket.

20. (Original) The seal of claim 19, wherein the gasket has a bottom portion that is substantially parallel to the top portion with the side portion being located between the top and bottom portions, the three portions cooperating to define an exterior surface and an interior surface, and the interior surface of the bottom portion abutting the inner wall.

21. (Original) The seal of claim 19, wherein the gasket has a generally L-shaped cross-section.

22. (Original) The seal of claim 19, wherein the two portions are disposed at approximately a right angle relative to each other when the gasket is viewed in cross-section.

23. (Original) The seal of claim 19, wherein the side portion is arced.

24. (Original) The seal of claim 20, wherein the top portion and the side portion are disposed at approximately a right angle relative to each other and the bottom portion is disposed at approximately a right angle relative to the side portion.

25. (Original) The seal of claim 20, wherein the side portion is arced.

26. (Original) The seal of claim 20, wherein the gasket when viewed in cross-section is J-shaped or U-shaped.
27. (Original) The seal of claim 19 or claim 20, wherein the gasket further comprises an attachment means, the attachment means being an adhesive applied to or an adhesive strip attached to the interior surface of the gasket.
28. (Original) The seal of claim 19 or claim 20, wherein the seal is affixed to the access opening with an adhesive, an adhesive strip or a mechanical fastener.
29. (Original) The seal of claim 19 or claim 20, wherein the gasket is formed of a polymeric material.
30. (Original) The seal of claim 19 or claim 20, wherein the gasket is formed of a polymeric material having a durometer ranging between 30-80.
31. (Original) The seal of claim 19 or claim 20, wherein the gasket is formed of ethylene propylene diene methylene terpolymer having a durometer ranging between 30-80.

Please add new claims 32 and 33 as follows:

32. (New) The watercraft of claim 1, wherein the storage compartment is removable.

33. (New) The seal of claim 19, wherein the storage compartment is removable.